

Though disappointed in the funding provided in the President's proposed budget for fiscal year 2012, Savannah's delegation to the United States Congress remains united in their fight for the Savannah Harbor Expansion Project. The President's proposal includes \$600,000 for preconstruction engineering and design for the project but includes no funding for construction.

Together, Senators Saxby Chambliss (R) and Johnny Isakson (R) along with Congressmen Jack Kingston (R) and John Barrow (D) have vowed to continue leading the charge in Washington for the project.

"I'm disappointed that the President's budget dedicated such little funding to such an important project. Times are tough, and we understand that tough choices have to be made. But this is an example of a project that will do real good right now," said Barrow. "Countless studies have concluded that expanding the Savannah Harbor will help create new local jobs and stimulate real economic growth for our country. As the budget process moves forward, we look forward to working with the President and members of both parties to see that this project receives the funding it rightly deserves."

"I will continue to fight, along with my Georgia colleagues, to fund the Savannah Harbor Expansion Project," said Chambliss. "This is a vitally important endeavor to ensure Savannah is able to accommodate global shipping traffic once the expansion of the Panama Canal is complete in 2014. This would bring more jobs and businesses not just to Georgia, but to the entire Southeast."

"The Port of Savannah supports hundreds of thousands of jobs in the state and contributes billions in revenue and state and local taxes each year. In addition, the U.S. Constitution grants Congress the power to regulate commerce, and that certainly includes our navigational waterways and our ports," said Isakson. "It is critically important that we expand the harbor to ensure it continues to act as a gateway for business to Georgia and to the nation. I will work relentlessly alongside members of the Georgia delegation to protect and maintain the economic asset we have in the Port of Savannah."

"While we would've liked to see more, this shows the Administration is still in support of the project," said Congressman Kingston. "Like us, they recognize that Savannah's harbor is a growing economic engine for our region and the nation as a whole. Combining that with Governor Deal's enthusiastic support and our united bipartisan delegation, we've got great synergy to make this happen."

The Savannah Harbor Expansion Project was authorized in the Water Resources and Development Act of 1999 to deepen the Savannah River from its current 42 foot depth to as much as 48 feet. The project is being undertaken in anticipation of an expansion of the Panama Canal which will increase the maximum draft of vessels travelling to and from the East Coast

from 39.5 feet to as much as 50 feet.

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